



5-Year Plan (2010 to 2011) King Conservation District

For More Information Contact:

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*Picture of Natural
Resource Project*

Organization of the King Conservation District

- The King Conservation District (KCD) is a natural resources assistance agency authorized by Washington State and guided by the Washington State Conservation Commission: RCW 89.08.
- A five-member Board of Supervisors is responsible for all District programs and activities.
- Since 1949, the KCD has been helping the people of King County manage their natural resources. The KCD is funded primarily by a per-parcel assessment fee.
- Most cities and all of unincorporated King County are members of the King Conservation District. The District receives some funding from the Washington State Conservation Commission. We also receive grants from other state, federal and local sources such as the Urban Resources Partnership, Department of Ecology, the Conservation Commission Research Grant and King County Block Grants. Although the District is authorized by the state legislature, it is not a state agency and does not receive an ongoing operating budget from the state's General Fund, as most state agencies do.
- The King Conservation District office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Function of the King Conservation District

- The King CD facilitates collaborative voluntary sustainable stewardship within and between the public and private sectors in the District and the Region.
- The KCD supports working lands as they benefit the community and natural resources.
- We educate landowners, schools, scientists, consultants and agencies in how to recognize problem situations and how to avoid creating them. We also provide technical assistance in solving their problems.
- We promote conservation through demonstration projects, educational events, providing technical assistance and, in some cases, providing or pointing the way to funds which may be available for projects. The KCD has no regulatory or enforcement authority. We only work with those who choose to work with us.
- The KCD works hand-in-hand with the local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The NRCS provides technical assistance to the KCD, conducts training sessions for KCD personnel and develops the practices and standards which the KCD uses to develop and implement its projects.

We Serve & Why

- All landowners within the District boundaries are entitled to free information and technical assistance for water quality protection, wildlife habitat enhancement, farm management plans, soil and slope stability information, native plant products, manure exchange information, volunteer opportunities, stream restoration/enhancement assistance and many other natural resource topics.
- Voluntary private sector stewardship has been shown to be the most effective and efficient path to sustainable stewardship and healthy environments

Mission of the King Conservation District

- To promote the sustainable use of natural resources through responsible stewardship.
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Vision of the King Conservation District

- King Conservation District will be recognized as a leader in achieving community based stewardship of lands within the District , with economically and environmentally sustainable working lands, vibrant agriculture and technically sound land, water and habitat stewardship embraced by all citizens.

Values of the King Conservation District

- Service
 - Respect
 - Cooperation
 - Responsibility
 - Effectiveness
 - Accountability
 - Transparency
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Natural Resource Priorities, Measures of Success and Goals:

- Support viable communities through sustainable private working lands – by 2015 12 small forest landowners will have certified forest plans . . . , acreage in working farms will have stabilized, the four cities in the Snoqualmie Valley will be economically viable,
 - Seek and build strategic conservation partnerships – by 2015 King CD will have secure partnerships with three new partner organizations that share the KCD vision. These new partnerships will result in improved conservation of soil, water, fish and wildlife within the altered environment
 - Build stronger working partnerships with District cities and their citizens in part through an expanded focus on sustainable management of water quality and quantity and small and urban forest management
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Critical Geographic Areas:

- KCD works District wide covering both urban and rural areas and issues.
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Information – Education Priorities, Measures of Success, and Goals:

- The District provides adult educational opportunities that promote the sustainable uses of natural resources through knowledge of, and training on, natural resource conservation principles and management practices.
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District Operations Priorities, Measures of Success, and Goals:

- Securing support and approval for its proposed system of assessments from the King County Council and the District's cities to stabilize funding for the District and its partners.
- Maintain and enhance participation in the annual District election
- Launch the process to establish a competitive compensation system for District staff by June 2010
- By May 2010 have effective and efficient operations including accounting, grant vouchering, personnel management, Supervisor elections & appointments (multiple candidates and voter turnout of 5000), review and adjust staff and Board training & development, annual planning and reporting

- Identify processes to improve and refine the operation of the Board, the staff and their interface with each other and with their constituents.

Trends Impacting Conservation in the King Conservation District

- The regional focus on salmon protection for the past decade has much influenced the District's funding and grant programs.
- With the current regional shift in focus from salmon to the overall health of Puget Sound and the emphasis on water quality the District is finding collaboration with regional partners to be more compatible with its mission and mandate
- The budget and funding challenges facing the region and the environmental sector has provided unexpected opportunities, such as new partners, and expected constraints on programs and staffing.

Strategies, Services & Products to Address Trends

- The District Board has enhanced and expanded its Advisory Committee to improve its regular communication and relationships with its constituent stakeholder interests.
- The District has expanded its volunteer program and thus raised its profile and the opportunities for citizen participation in District service activities
- The District has increased its capacity to provide technical assistance and workshops to landowners to improve district wide stewardship of farmland, forest land, streams, wetlands and sensitive natural habitats.
- The district has engaged a consultant to oversee and improve its annual election process. This effort has resulted in much expanded voter and candidate participation. Additionally, media coverage of the 2010 election was significantly greater than in years past and has resulted in conversations with the County and the Commission focused on longer term solutions.

Natural Resource Data: ** (TBD)

- *Enter a summary of the natural resource status using existing data. Attach maps and data in an appendix to this plan.*

Staffing Needs ** (TBD)

- *Enter a summary of the staff positions needed to carry out the plan of the XYZ Conservation District based on the above information.*

Annual Budget Needs (TBD)**

- Budget constraints have resulted in the downsizing curtailing of programs and projects
- The 2011 budget will be developed and adopted in December 2010

Key Decision Makers

- Because of the size and significance of the KCD's special assessment funding and the decade long history of budget expectations and compromises there is a continuing need for the District to nurture its relationship with county and city elected officials. This challenge is exacerbated by the recent budget cuts to programs throughout the district, the 2009 assessment process and the new county executive administration team.
- Because the two key issues: the CD election process and the special assessment process, it will be imperative that conservation districts state wide and the elected representatives from those districts, the Conservation Commission and state agencies concerned with natural resource management issues also be included in the discussions.

- Key decision makers and influencers include: King County Council members, King county Executive's office and administration, District city elected officials, King County legislators, regional and statewide conservation districts and relevant state agencies and resource focused NGOs.

Benchmarks, Timeline, & Actions:** (TBD: the following two benchmarks are established for 2010.

Strategic Priority: Stabilize and secure funding

Measurable Goal: Conclude negotiations with King County for special assessment

Benchmark	Timeline	6 Month Actions
Reach accord with King County and city officials on the special assessment	December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revamp Advisory committee ▪ Meet with key city and county representatives to reach agreement on use and control of assessment funds
Repair relationship with county and city officials	September 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One on one and small group meetings to listen, identify common goals ▪ Ask for help and support ▪ Offer reciprocal support

Strategic Priority: Increase profile of, and participation in the District election

Measurable Goal: Number of voters, number of candidates and extent of media coverage

Benchmark	Timeline	6 Month Actions
Maintain or improve the KCD election profile and participation	March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use election consultant ▪ Increase media coverage ▪ Increase ask to partners for support
Open focused discussion with County officials and others on options	December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with the Commission, the legislature and the executive and legislative branches of King County to explore options

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NOTE: The KCD was scheduled to focus in 2009 on expanding its long range plan beyond 2010. This effort needed to be postponed to allow the Board and staff time to concentrate on the most contentious and challenging of negotiations it has experienced for the renewal of its special assessment. Moreover, in addition to budget cuts there is a continuing need to repair recent damage to the relationship between the

parties that will require continued focus on this matter and may further postpone the task of updating the District's long range plan. Thus, several items in this report are noted as TBD and have 6 month timelines.

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices

*Picture of Natural
Resource Project*